

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Active Directory — Microsoft's trademarked directory service, an integral part of the Windows 2000 architecture. Active Directory is a centralized and standardized system that automates network management of user data, security, and distributed resources, and enables interoperation with other directories. Active Directory is designed especially for distributed networking environments.

AMS Asset Management System — An application that enables the electronic tracking of selected fixed assets within each facility of an organization.

ASP Active Server Page — A feature of the Microsoft Internet Information Server that incorporates scripts run on the server that uses input received from a web browser.

ATM Asynchronous Transfer Mode — A connection-oriented network technology that uses small, fixed-size cells at the lowest layer. ATM has the potential advantage of being able to support voice, video, and data with a single underlying technology.

Bandwidth — Used to explain (1) how fast data flows on a given transmission path, and (2), somewhat more technically, the width of the range of frequencies that an electronic signal occupies on a given transmission medium. Any digital or analog signal has a bandwidth.

Broadband — Telecommunication in which a wide band of frequencies is available to transmit information. Because a wide band of frequencies is available, information can be multiplexed and sent on many different frequencies or channels within the band concurrently, allowing more information to be transmitted in a given amount of time (just as more lanes on a highway allow more cars to travel on it at the same time).

CDPD Cellular Digital Packet Data - A specification for supporting wireless access to the Internet and other public packet-switched networks. Cellular telephone and modem providers that offer CDPD support make it possible for mobile users to get access to the Internet at up to 19.2 Kbps.

CICS Customer Information Control System — An online transaction processing (OLTP) program from IBM that, together with the COBOL programming language, represents the most common set of tools for building customer transaction applications in the world of large enterprise mainframe computing. CICS has been a standard for the past several decades.

Circuit — A discrete (specific) path between two or more points along which signals can be carried.

CLEC Competitive Local Exchange Carrier — A company that competes with the already established local telephone business by providing its own network and switching.

Client-Server — The model of interaction in a distributed computing system in which a program at one site sends a request to a program at another site and awaits a response. The requesting program is called a client; the program satisfying the request is called the server.



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COBOL Common Business Oriented Language — The first widely used high-level programming language for business applications. Many payroll, accounting, and other business application programs written in COBOL over the past 35 years are still in use today.

COM Component Object Model — Microsoft's framework for developing and supporting program component objects.

CORBA Common Object Request Broker Architecture — An architecture and specification for creating, distributing, and managing distributed program objects in a network. It allows programs at different locations and developed by different vendors to communicate in a network through an "interface broker."

Data Warehouse — Specialized databases that use data extracted from other operational systems for reporting purposes.

DBA Database Administrator — A person who directs or performs all activities related to maintaining a successful database environment. Responsibilities generally include designing, implementing, and maintaining the database system; establishing policies and procedures pertaining to the management, security, maintenance, and use of the database management system; and training employees in database management and use.

DBMS Database Management System — A program that lets one or more computer users create and access data in a database. The DBMS manages user requests (and requests from other programs) so that users and other programs are free from having to understand where the data is physically located on storage media and, in a multi-user system, who else may also be accessing the data.

DS3 — A telephony classification of speed for leased lines equivalent to approximately 45 Mbps.

DSL Digital Subscriber Line — A technology for bringing high-bandwidth information to homes and small businesses over ordinary copper telephone lines.

EAI Enterprise Application Integration — A business computing term for the plans, methods, and tools aimed at modernizing, consolidating, and coordinating the computer applications in an enterprise.

E-commerce — The buying and selling of goods and services on the Internet, especially the World Wide Web.

EDM Enterprise Data Model — A high-level view of the data used by an organization. The model focuses on how each piece of data relates to other data in the enterprise, and how business-areas are supported by the various systems and datasets available throughout the enterprise.

ERP Enterprise Resource Planning — An industry term for the broad set of activities supported by multi-module application software that helps a business manage the important parts of its business, including product planning, parts purchasing, maintaining inventories, interacting with suppliers, providing customer service, and tracking orders. ERP can also include application modules for the finance and human resources aspects of a business.



ETL Extract-Transform-Load — In managing databases, refers to three separate functions combined into a single programming tool. First, the extract function reads data from a specified source database and extracts a desired subset of data. Next, the transform function works with the acquired data - using rules or lookup tables, or creating combinations with other data - to convert it to the desired state. Finally, the load function is used to write the resulting data (either all of the subset or just the changes) to a target database, which may or may not previously exist.

Firewall — A configuration of routers, appliances, and networks placed between an organization's internal network and a connection to the Internet to provide security.

Firmware — Programming that is inserted into programmable read-only memory (programmable ROM), thus becoming a permanent part of a computing device.

FTE Full-Time Employee — Individual who works at least 40 hours per week for an employer.

FTP File Transfer Protocol — The TCP/IP standard, high-level protocol for transferring files from one machine to another

GB Gigabyte — A measure of computer data storage capacity and is "roughly" a billion bytes.

Gigabit — A gigabit is one billion bits, or 1,000,000,000 (that is, 10^9) bits. It's commonly used for measuring the amount of data that is transferred in a second between two telecommunication points.

J2EE Java 2 Platform, Enterprise Edition — A Java platform designed for the mainframe-scale computing typical of large enterprises. J2EE simplifies application development and decreases the need for programming and programmer training by creating standardized, reusable modular components and by enabling the tier to handle many aspects of programming automatically.

LAN Local Area Network — Any physical network technology designed to span short distances (up to a few thousand meters). Usually, LANs operate at tens of megabits per second through several gigabits per second.

LEC Local Exchange Carrier — The term for a public telephone company in the U.S. that provides local service.

Mainframe — An industry term for a large computer, typically manufactured by a large company such as IBM for the commercial applications of Fortune 1000 businesses and other large-scale computing purposes. Historically, a mainframe is associated with centralized rather than distributed computing.

Meta Data — Data that defines other types of information falling into two categories—information that explains data, and information about where and how to get information.

Middleware — A general term for any programming that serves to "glue together" or mediate between two separate and usually already existing programs. A common application of middleware is to allow programs written for access to a particular database to access other databases.



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MIPS Millions of Instructions Per Second — A general measure of computing performance and, by implication, the amount of work a larger computer can do.

MOM Message-Oriented Middleware — A client/server infrastructure that increases the interoperability, portability, and flexibility of an application by allowing the application to be distributed over multiple heterogeneous platforms. It reduces the complexity of developing applications that span multiple operating systems and network protocols by insulating the application developer from the details of the various operating system and network interfaces- application programming interfaces (APIs) that extend across diverse platforms and networks.

NAS Network Attached Storage — Hard disk storage that is set up with its own network address rather than being attached to the department computer that is serving applications to a network's workstation users.

.NET — Microsoft's collection of programming support for what are known as web services, the ability to use the Web rather than your own computer for various services. The .NET platform includes servers; building-block services, such as Web-based data storage; and device software.

NOC Network Operations Center — Any organization that manages a network.

Node — In a network, a node is a connection point, either a redistribution point or an end point for data transmissions.

OC-48 — A set of signal rate multiples for transmitting digital signals on optical fiber. OC-48 transmits data at a rate of 2.488 Gbps.

ODBC Open Database Connectivity — An open standard application programming interface (API) for accessing a database.

OLAP On-Line Analytical Processing — Computer processing that enables a user to easily and selectively extract and view data from different points-of-view. OLAP data is stored in a multidimensional database.

PBX Private Branch Exchange — A telephone system within an enterprise that switches calls between enterprise users on local lines while allowing all users to share a certain number of external phone lines.

PDA Personal Digital Assistant — A term for any small mobile hand-held device that provides computing and information storage and retrieval capabilities for personal or business use, often for keeping schedule calendars and address book information handy.

Protocol — A formal description of message formats and the rules two or more machines must follow to exchange those messages.

RAM Random Access Memory — The place in a computer where the operating system, application programs, and data in current use are kept so that they can be quickly reached by the computer's processor.



Relational database — A collection of data items organized as a set of formally described tables from which data can be accessed or reassembled in many different ways without having to reorganize the database tables.

Routers — A special purpose, dedicated network appliance that attaches to two or more networks and forwards packets from one to the other.

SAN Storage Area Network — A high-speed special-purpose network (or subnetwork) that interconnects different kinds of data storage devices with associated data servers on behalf of a larger network of users.

Script — A program or sequence of instructions that is interpreted or carried out by another program rather than by the computer processor (as a compiler program is). A script is sometimes used to mean a list of operating system commands that are prestored in a file and performed sequentially by the operating system's command interpreter whenever the list name is entered as a single command.

SLA Service Level Agreement — A contract between a network service provider and a customer that specifies, usually in measurable terms, what services the network service provider will furnish.

SQL Structured Query Language — A standard interactive and programming language for getting information from and updating a database.

Switch — A network device that selects a path or circuit for sending a unit of data to its next destination.

T1 — The most commonly used digital line in the United States, Canada, and Japan capable of transmitting data at a rate of 1.544 million bits per second. T1 lines use copper wire and span distances within and between major metropolitan areas.

TCO Total Cost of Ownership — A type of calculation designed to help enterprise managers assess both direct and indirect costs and benefits related to the purchase of any technology component.

TCP Transfer Control Protocol — The TCP/IP standard transport level protocol that provides reliable, full duplex, stream service on which many application protocols depend.

Telnet — The TCP/IP standard protocol for remote terminal service. Telnet allows a user at one site to interact with a remote timesharing system at another site as if the user's keyboard and display connected directly to the remote machine.

Unified Messaging — The handling of voice, fax, and regular text messages as objects in a single mailbox that a user can access either with a regular e-mail client or by telephone. The PC user can open and play back voice messages, assuming their PC has multimedia capabilities.

VSAM Virtual Storage Access Method — A file management system for IBM's larger operating systems, including its primary mainframe operating system, MVS, now called OS/390. Using VSAM, an enterprise can create and access records in a file in the sequential order that they were entered.



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WAN Wide Area Network — Any physical network technology that spans large geographic distances. Also called long-haul networks, WANs usually operate at slower speeds and have significantly higher delays than networks that operate over shorter distances.

Web Portal — A World Wide Web site that is or proposes to be a major starting site for users when they get connected to the Web or that users tend to visit as an anchor site on an intranet.

Web-Hosting — The business of housing, serving, and maintaining files for one or more web sites.